Example of discussing texts with children

Text:

"Let's get the dinner on shall we?" said Matthew's mum.
"What are we having, Mum?" Matthew asked her.
"Cottage pie and peas," she replied cheerily.
Matthew grinned from ear to ear. Mum smiled back at him.
"I tell you what," she said, "why don't you go and learn your spellings for twenty minutes before we have dinner?"
The smile on Matthew's face disappeared.
"Do I have to?" he whined. Matthew thought practising spellings was a bit like watching paint dry.

Retrieval of information
Example question: What was Matthew's mum making for dinner?
Expected answer: Cottage pie and peas.

Inference
Example question: How does Matthew feel about eating cottage pie and peas? How do you know?
Expected answer: He loves cottage pie and peas. We know this because he grins from ear to ear when his mum tells him that is what she is making for dinner.

Deduction
Example question: What do you think Matthew might do next? Explain why you think this.
Possible expected answers: There could be several answers to this, but the person sharing the text with the child would be looking for the child to have thought about what Matthew might do, based on what they have read.

For example: I think Matthew will go and watch TV instead of doing his spellings because he doesn't want to do his spellings.

At this point try to encourage use of PEE [Point, Explanation, Example/Evidence] by asking an additional question.

How do you know he doesn't want to do his spellings?

Expected answer: It says, 'The smile disappears from his face.' This shows he has gone from being happy about the meal to sad when he realises his mum wants him to do his spellings when he's finished eating.

Opinion
Example question: Do you think Matthew's mum is a kind person? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
Answer: Yes, I think Matthew's mum is a kind person because she is cooking his favourite meal. We also know she wants him to do well at school, which is why she asks him to practise his spellings. (Note expanded answer showing PEE)

Commenting on effectiveness of language
Example question: 'Matthew thought practising spellings was a bit like watching paint dry.' Why is this a good way to show how Matthew feels about his spellings?
Answer: The author is comparing spelling practice to watching paint dry to show how boring Matthew finds it.

At this point encourage expansion of the explanation.

Possible question: Why watching paint dry?

Possible answer: Well watching paint dry would be boring because it takes ages to dry and it dries by itself. You don't need to do anything, it just does it so watching it happen would be really boring.